

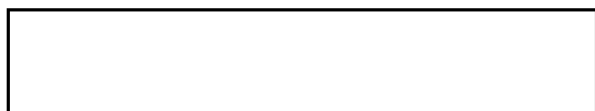
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Philippines: President Marcos is trying to deflect political pressures from himself onto the US.

Presidential aides have been trying to guide student protests away from the government's lack of concern for needed domestic programs and to provoke charges of US interference in the Philippines. The shouting of only a few anti-US slogans during the generally peaceful demonstrations on 12 February suggests that this ploy has initially had slight success. The thrust of the demonstrations was still against Marcos, and he may yet be forced to go beyond his shuffle of a few senior government personnel to satisfy the students.

Marcos is already taking steps to head off the repercussions of such an eventuality. He is circulating a story that the US supported the student demonstrations of the past several weeks and that the cabinet revamping was the US price for easing the alleged efforts against him.

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The US ambassador has brought US awareness of these maneuvers forcefully to the attention of the Philippine foreign secretary.

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